



Celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Basic principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power

High level event

15 April 2015

13:00-14:30

*Learn what has happened since the adoption of the UN Declaration on Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power and what UNODC and partners are doing to help Member States implement the Declaration. UNODC is organising a High-Level Event with the World Society of Victimology, Intervict, International Organisation for Victim Assistance, WHO, UNDP, OHCHR, the International Criminal Court and high-level representatives from delegations attending the Congress*

We have the pleasure to confirm the following speakers:

- **Prof. Irvin Waller**, Moderator, International Organization for Victim Assistance
- **Mr. Jean-Luc Lemahieu**, Director, Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs
- **Ms. Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi**, President of the International Criminal Court, (video-message)
- **Ms. Mona Rishmawi**, Chief, Rule of Law, Equality and Non Discrimination Branch, OHCHR
- **Mr. Alejandro Alvarez**, Team Leader Rule of Law, Justice, Security and Human Rights, UNDP
- **Dr. Alexander Butchart**, Coordinator, Prevention of Violence, WHO
- **H.R.H. Khaled bin Ali bin Abdallah Al Khalifah**, Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs, KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN (TBC)
- **Mr. Donald K. Piragoff**, Q.C., Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Justice, Head of Delegation, CANADA
- **Mr. Michael O'Connell**, Commissioner for Victims' Rights, SOUTH AUSTRALIA
- **H.E. Ewa Polano**, Swedish Ambassador to Qatar, SWEDEN

- **Prof. Marc Groenhuijsen**, President of the World Society of Victimology and Intervict
- **Ms. Maria de la Luz Lima**, President of the Mexican Society for Victimology and INACIPE
- **Ms. Marlene Young**, International Organization for Victim Assistance

Coffee and cake will be served at the end of the event

The recognition of Victim's rights has been a long-term undertaking for the United Nations. From the very beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and throughout the years with the various Conventions, Declarations, and Guidelines, the United Nations always took a stand to improve the Rights for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power.

By adopting the Declaration in 1985,, the United Nations General Assembly urged the recognition of the rights for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power with the hope that those principles would become the catalyst for further internationally recognition.

With the establishment of the International Criminal Court, a new major step forward in international law for a victim-centred approach to justice was made. The recognition of the rights of victims of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in the Statute of the Court was ground-breaking as for the first time in time in the history of international criminal justice, victims have the possibility under the Statute to present their views and observations before the Court. Participation before the Court may occur at various stages of the proceedings and may take different forms. However, it will be up to the judges to give directions as to the timing and manner of participation. Participation in the Court's proceedings will in most cases take place through a legal representative and will be conducted "in a manner which is not prejudicial or inconsistent with the rights of the accused and a fair and impartial trial." The victim-based provisions within the Rome Statute provide victims with the opportunity to have their voices heard and to obtain, where appropriate, some form of reparation for their suffering. It is this balance between retributive and restorative justice that will enable the ICC to not only bring criminals to justice but also to help the victims themselves rebuild their lives.

In 2003 and 2005 another step forward was achieved, with the recognition of the rights of victims in Article 25 (*Assistance to and protection of victims*) of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, chapter II of the Trafficking Protocol and Article 32 (*Protection of witnesses, experts and victims*) of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy has laid the foundation for the United Nation's work on victims of terrorism adopted by the General Assembly in September 2006 addresses Victims of terrorism issues under Pillar I and Pillar IV of the Strategy. These strive to "promote international solidarity in support of victims", stress "the need to promote and protect the rights of victims of terrorism", and seek to address the "dehumanization of victims of terrorism" by promoting "solidarity for victims of terrorism and assistance for victims and their families and facilitate the normalization of their lives."

UNODC as per its mandates has developed a number of technical tools in this area and is providing technical assistance to Member States in the area of victim and witness support. In 2013, the Office decided to update the Handbook on Justice for Victims on the use and application of the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims and Abuse of Power which had been originally published in 1999.

In December 2014, WHO published, jointly with UNODC and UNDP, the *Global status report on violence prevention* which is the first report of its kind to assess national efforts – including data collection, policies, laws, prevention programmes and victim services – to address interpersonal

violence in over 130 countries. The Prevention of Violence Unit's objective is to spearhead global action to address interpersonal violence as a major threat to public health using advocacy, data collection, trend monitoring, evaluation and dissemination of science-based approaches to preventing violence. It focuses on preventing violence before it occurs and on responding to violence by providing services to identify, refer, treat, and support victims of violence.

IOVA advances rights and services for victims as well as the prevention of victimization across the globe. It functions as a catalyst for change. It promotes more effective programs through advocacy, publishing, training, action and evaluation of results. It focuses on capacity building that is trauma-informed, victim-centred, and culturally appropriate. It provides direct emotional and psychological interventions

Since the adoption of the Declaration many countries have adopted legislation and policies to strengthen the rights of victims of crime and abuse of power. Regional organisations have also adopted standards and policies to protect and assist victim of crime.

The High-Level Event aims at taking stock of advances made since the adoption of the Declaration, present current projects and provide guidance for the work of the Office and partners in the next years. It also aims at showing the important role played by NGOs and civil society in the area of victim assistance.